

Message Text

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FOR: PGM/RC; VOA/PL; PGM/PP; ARA/CEN

E.O. 11652: N/A
SUBJ: MEDIA REACTION

1. TEGUCIGALPA - FOR THE THIRD STRAIGHT DAY THE THREE MAJOR DAILIES, LA PRENSA, LA TRIBUNA AND TIEMPO DEDICATE THEIR FRONT PAGES TO THE MANAGUA PALACE TAKEOVER STORY. READERS HAVE BEEN TREATED TO NUMEROUS PHOTOS OF THE BLOODY VICTIMS OF THE ATTACH, EXTERIORS OF THE PALACE, AND TODAY AUGUST 25 GLAMOROUS SHOTS OF THE SANDI-NISTAS' TRIUMPHANT DEPARTURE FROM MANAGUA AND ARRIVAL IN PANAMA.

2. RADIO COVERAGE OF THE EVENT WAS COPIOUS, ESPECIAL ON LEADING NETWORK HRN, FEATURING HOUR-LONG LIVE FEEDS FROM MANAGUA.

3. PUBLIC AND MEDIA REACTION SHOWED CONCERN FOR THE HOSTAGES, CENSURES OF THE TERRORIST TACTICS, BUT LITTLE SYMPATHY FOR THE SOMOZA REGIME. TIEMPO OF SAN PEDRO SULA PROVIDES A REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE OF PRESS REACTION IN ITS LEAD EDIT OF AUGUST 25 ENTITLED, "ARMS ALONE ARE NOT ENOUGH TO SUPPORT A GOVERNMENT."

4. "GENERAL ANASTASIO SOMOZA," BEGINS TIEMPO, "HAS AN ARMY AT HIS SERVICE BUT STILL HIS GOVERNMENT DOES NOT FEEL SECURE. MILITARY FORCE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR A POPULAR CONSENSUS, AND CONSEQUENTLY, ARMS ALONE AND THE MEN TO USE THEM OUT OF LOYALTY TO A DESPOT FORGETTING THEIR DUTY TO THE NATION, ARE NOT ENOUGH TO GIVE STA-
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BILITY TO A VIOLENT REGIME. MATERIAL INSTRUMENTS AND FORCE TO SUBDUE THE DISCONTENTED ARE NOT ENOUGH TO GUARANTEE THE STABILITY OF A HATED GOVERNMENT."

5. TIEMPO LATER ARGUES: "BROKEN AS SOMOZA'S PERSONAL POWER IS, THE DICTATOR DOESN'T FALL, IT MAINTAINS ITSELF EVEN THOUGH THE PROCESS OF DETERIORATION IS BY NOW IRREVERSIBLE AND CAN NO

LONGER RE-CONQUER THE RELATIVE STABILITY OF A FEW YEARS BACK."

6. "THERE WAS A TIME," CONTINUES TIEMPO, "WHEN PRESSURE FROM WASHINGTON IN DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS WAS ORIENTED TOWARD CHANGING THE PRESIDENT, BUT NOWADAYS THAT VIEW HAS BEEN WEAKENED FOR FEAR OF WHAT COULD HAPPEN POLITICALLY IN NICARAGUA. THE FEAR OF A NEW GOVERNMENT INFLUENCED BY RADICAL SECTORS, CONCRETELY THE SANDINISTA LIBERATION FRONT, STILL KEEPS GENERAL SOMOZA IN POWER."
"NEVERTHELESS, THE CONTINUANCE OF THE SOMOZA FAMILY IN POWER HAS THE EFFECT OF RADICALIZING THE OPPOSITION, EVEN THOUGH THE GUERRILLA COMMANDS ARE NOT IN CONDITION TO PUT TOGETHER A GOVERNMENT."

7. REFERRING TO THE COMMUNIST THREAT, TIEMPO ADDS: "IT IS ERRONEOUS TO BELIEVE THAT GENERAL SOMOZA IS STILL A SURE BASTION AGAINST COMMUNISM. ON THE CONTRARY, THE LONGER HIS REIN IS PROLONGED, THE MORE THE MOVEMENT TOWARD THE LEFT IS STIMULATED BY THE IMPACT OF THE SPECTACULAR GUERRILLA ACTIONS."

8. TIEMPO CONCLUDES: "THE TAKING OF THE NATIONAL PALACE WILL GO DOWN IN HISTORY AS AN IMPORTANT LANDMARK IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST TYRANNY, SOMEWHAT LIKE THE ATTACK ON THE MONCADA HEADQUARTERS IN CUBA - DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENTS, THE AUTHENTIC ONES NOT THE FALSE ONES, WITH THEIR CONCERN FOR THE PRINCIPLES OF SOCIAL JUSTICE, ARE NOT ONLY THE STRONGEST BECAUSE OF THEIR POPULAR SUPPORT, BUT, ALSO ARE THOSE WHICH MOST DISSUADE VIOLENCE AND OTHER TYPES OF
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POLITICAL DESPERATION. IF WE COMPARE THE SYSTEMS OF GOVERNMENT OF NICARAGUA AND COSTA RICA, THE ABOVE THESES IS CONFIRMED."
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